

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Honduran Guerrilla Unit

FROM

Chief, Latin America Division

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

7 December 1983

25X1

25X1

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. DCI

Attached is the paper on the Honduran guerrilla unit trained in Cuba and Nicaragua that you asked for.

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5.

cc: DDCI
DDO/ADDO

6.

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FORM 1-79

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USE PREVIOUS EDITIONS

BACKGROUND ON INTERNATIONALIST MILITARY UNIT ORGANIZED
BY NICARAGUA TO CONDUCT INSURGENT OPERATIONS IN HONDURAS

1. A company of approximately 100 guerrillas, trained in Cuba and Nicaragua, entered Honduras from Nicaragua on 19 July 1983 to carry out insurgent operations in Olancho Department.

2. The first indication that guerrillas had entered Olancho came from a small number of the group who deserted as soon as they entered Honduras. The consistency of the stories related by the first deserters and those who later followed, regarding their recruitment and training, can be attributed to the fact that they were penned up together before their debriefings. In almost all cases, these guerrillas were recruited by deception. Most were told they would receive some type of training in mechanics or agriculture. In general, they were not told they would go to Nicaragua for training, and none of them were told they would also train in Cuba. The training usually took up to two years and included 4-6 months in Cuba at a guerrilla training school in Pinar del Rio where they received instruction in ideology and military subjects such as weapons, intelligence and tactics.

3. Following the training in Cuba, the Hondurans were sent to Nicaragua for additional preparation before their entry into Honduras on July 19. In general, the deserters had little sympathy with Marxism and Athesism, and were repulsed by the idea of eventually killing their own countrymen. Many decided

S E C R E T

to desert as soon as they had the opportunity to get back to Honduras. The logistics of the operation also appeared poorly planned. Most of the guerrillas were burdened with extra weapons and equipment for their mission and had food only for a fortnight. Consequently, morale was low.

4. By 29 August, eight guerrillas had either deserted or were captured. Military operations against the remaining guerrillas began, based on information obtained from the prisoners. The prisoners said their group was virtually disbanded because they lost contact with their base in Nicaragua and lacked adequate supplies. They said that each of three platoons comprising the insurgent company had been assigned to a specific area in Honduras to operate within already established insurgent commands. A fourth platoon was to act as a ready reserve or reaction force.

5. By 8 September 1983 a total of 29 insurgents had either deserted, been captured, or killed, as pursuit operations by the Honduran Armed Forces continued.

6. During August the Nicaraguan Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was in radio communications with the guerrilla group, led by Jose Maria REYES Matta, leader of the Central American Revolutionary Workers Party (PRTC). In several messages, REYES complained that he was not receiving needed logistical support.

7. By late September, the Honduran Armed Forces had accounted for almost all of the 96 guerrillas. According to the

Honduran Government, 51 had been killed in action, including REYES, and 24 had deserted or been captured. One was executed by his comrades, one returned to Nicaragua, and 11 were found starved to death. James Francis CARNEY, AKA "Padre Guadalupe," an American-born priest, was believed to be among the latter, although his body has not been found. The success of the Armed Forces in this operation can be attributed to their tenacity in pursuing the guerrillas through extremely rough terrain, the inept recruiting and logistical support for the insurgents, and the hostility of the people of Olancho Department who in most cases reported any knowledge of the guerrillas' movements to the army.

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